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- (1) Chief Cabinet Secretary Takeo Kawamura: Japanese government welcomes release of U.S. reporters

JIIJ.COM (Full)

12:01, August 5, 2009

At a news conference on the morning of August 5, Chief Cabinet Secretary Takeo Kawamura stated that "the Japanese government welcomes" the release of the U.S. reporters as a result of former President Bill Clinton's visit to North Korea. He also stated that, "We hope that this will lead to progress in U.S.-DRPK talks and in the Six-Party Talks, resulting in progress in the abduction issue and other pending issues and a move in the direction of normalization of Japan-DPRK relations."

Kawamura also revealed that the Japanese government had received advance notice of Clinton's visit. However, he refrained from commenting on when and how the notice was given.

(2) Chief Cabinet Secretary Takeo Kawamura: Japanese government given advance notice on ex-President Clinton's trip to North Korea

TOKYO SHIMBUN ONLINE (Full)
Evening, August 5, 2009

Chief Cabinet Secretary Takeo Kawamura revealed at a news conference on the morning of August 5 that "the Japanese government received an advance notice (from the U.S. government)" on the visit by former President Bill Clinton to North Korea. However, Kawamura avoided answering a question on whether Japan had been informed about the details of Clinton's itinerary, such as his meeting with General Secretary Kim Jong Il. "I will refrain from making any comments," he said.

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Kawamura indicated that "the Japanese government also welcomes" the release of the two female U.S. reporters. With regard to the impact of Clinton's visit on the nuclear and abduction issues, Kawamura limited his comments, saying only: "(The trip to the DPRK) was separate from the nuclear issue and was for the humanitarian purpose of working for the release of the two reporters. I am not in a position to comment on the meeting with General Secretary Kim."

(3) Families of abductees urge government to make moves to resolve abduction issue following release of U.S. journalists

TOKYO SHIMBUN ONLINE (Abridged slightly)
Evening, August 5, 2009

The two American female journalists who were detained in North Korea were released earlier today owing to a visit to North Korea by former U.S. President Bill Clinton. Meanwhile, families of Japanese abductees urged the government and influential figures later today to take aggressive measures, saying, "We want to see anyone, anyone at all in Japan, to make moves toward resolving (the abduction issue)."

Shigeru Yokota, 76, the father of Megumi Yokota, who went missing at the age of 13, said, "I want to see anyone, even a private citizen, conduct talks with North Korea." North Korea promised during the working-level talks with Japan last August to establish a committee to reinvestigate (the fate of the Japanese abductees). That promise has not been delivered. "This side should push the North to take action," Yokota said in frustration with the abduction issue that has not moved forward.

Kenichi Ichikawa, 64, elder brother of Shuichi Ichikawa who went missing at 23, expressed his concern that North Korea might again set the pace. He thinks both the abduction issue and the Six-Party Talks have been proceeding according to North Korea's intentions. Ichikawa said that he is envious that the two American journalists can now return home.

(4) U.S.-Japan mission to form "G-2" for a nuclear-weapon-free world:
taking the lead in striking a balance between the elimination of nuclear arms and the peaceful use of nuclear energy

NIKKEI (Page 3) (Excerpts)

August 3, 2009

Naoaki Okabe, chief editor

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the end of the Cold War. It will be a year in which the world takes a historic step toward the elimination of nuclear weapons and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Against the background of the danger of nuclear proliferation in North Korea and Iran, U.S. President Barack Obama has proposed a "world without nuclear weapons" and taken steps to hold U.S.-Russian nuclear disarmament talks. Preparations for a conference to review the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in spring 2010 are also in progress.

Meanwhile, the prevention of global warming has become a global issue in the run-up to the Conference on the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (the Copenhagen Conference) in late 2009. The key to preventing global warming is nuclear energy. Japan, the only

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country on which an atomic bomb has been dropped, and America, the only country that has used an atomic bomb, are tasked with a great historic mission to strike a balance between the elimination of nuclear arms and the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

"As the only nuclear power to have used a nuclear weapon, the United States has a moral responsibility to act," remarked Obama in a speech in Prague this spring. His words carried the weight of 64 years of history.

Twenty years after the end of the Cold War has the world finally come to take the "road to sanity" (Alva Myrdal, Nobel Peace Prize laureate)?

In the final phase of the Cold War, Europe became the arena of a nuclear crisis amid the U.S.-Soviet confrontation. However, the present crisis of nuclear proliferation is even more dangerous than the conflict of the two superpowers during the Cold War era. The international community's virtual neglect of the issue of the possession of nuclear arms by India and Pakistan has led to the crisis of nuclear proliferation in North Korea and Iran. There is also the potential danger of nuclear terrorism. Learning a lesson from this experience, the international community has only one option -- to unite, adopt a firm attitude, and take action with respect to the crisis of nuclear proliferation.

While Obama took care to say that a "world without nuclear weapons" may not be achieved quickly - "perhaps not in my lifetime" - now is the time to answer the question of what course of action to take to realize this goal. Yoriko Kawaguchi, former minister of foreign affairs and environment minister and co-chair of the International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament, describes the "road map" for the elimination of nuclear arms as follows:

The first phase is up to 2012. The U.S. ratifies the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and makes progress in nuclear disarmament talks with Russia. Negotiation for the Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty is concluded. The second phase lasts until 2025. The number of nuclear arms is reduced to the minimum. The goal is to have zero nuclear weapons in the third and last phase beyond 2025.

The road map toward a nuclear-free world coincides almost completely with the road map for the prevention of global warming - from the Kyoto Protocol to the post-Kyoto agreement (mid-term targets), and finally, the long-term targets.

This is because "the worst crises for the 21st Century are the nuclear crisis and the crisis of global warming." (Kawaguchi)

The trump card for the prevention of global warming is the peaceful use of nuclear energy. While it is necessary to make maximum efforts to develop solar energy, wind power generation, and other new forms of energy, this will not be sufficient. It is critical to increase the ratio of nuclear power generation. This is the reason why there is a worldwide trend toward returning to nuclear energy.

In the case of Japan, it should first increase the utilization rate of nuclear power plants from the current 60 percent level. Director General Toru Ishida of the Agency of Natural Resources and Energy says: "Our goal is for nuclear power to cover 40 percent of power generation. However, this needs to be increased to 50 percent by building new nuclear power plants and other measures if we are to

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meet the long-term target for slashing greenhouse gas emissions."

Ishida also points out that there is a considerable gap between the international appraisal of Japan's nuclear energy technology and the perceived role of nuclear power plants in the country." The only way to narrow this gap is by thoroughgoing safety measures.

Nuclear inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) will become more important for preventing proliferation while promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy. With greater reliance on nuclear power generation, the functions of the IAEA will need to be reinforced. Close collaboration with the UN Security Council will also be required. The notion of a fuel bank should also be considered to prevent the proliferation of uranium enrichment and reprocessing technology. A multinational management framework will be necessary for peaceful use of nuclear energy.

A dramatic historical change has taken place. Former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and other players behind the Cold War are now all calling for denuclearization because it is increasingly dangerous to rely on nuclear weapons for deterrence, and this is gaining widespread support among the world leaders from the Cold War era.

How can we take advantage of this historic trend? Japan's role is of critical importance. The fact that it has consistently taken action for the elimination of nuclear arms by sending out messages from Hiroshima and Nagasaki and through UN resolutions is of great significance. Yukiya Amano, who has been elected as the "nuclear watchdog" (IAEA director general), eyes the popularization of the Japanese model. "It is meaningful to share Japan's experience with the world," he notes.

In terms of a nuclear-free world and the peaceful use of nuclear energy, the countries that will play the role of G-2 are Japan and the U.S., not the U.S. and China. It is also the United States' mission to demand nuclear disarmament efforts from China. The only atomic-bombed country and the only country that has ever used nuclear weapons should overcome history and work hand in hand to surmount the global crisis of the 21st Century.

(5) Lower House Foreign Affairs Committee chair Taro Kono: Three no-nuclear principles have already fallen apart

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 23) (Full)
August 5, 2009

Taro Kono, chairman of the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee, gave an interview to Tokyo Shimbun's "special reporting section" and said: "The government has been deceiving the people. The three no-nuclear principles have already fallen apart." Kono met former Vice Foreign Minister Ryohei Murata on July 10 and confirmed the existence of a "secret nuclear agreement" between Japan and the U.S. He is demanding that the government change its statement to the Diet (that no such agreement existed).

Kono said that he talked with Murata for over one hour. In addition, testimony from several people involved in this matter, statements by former U.S. Ambassador Edwin Reischauer and retired Rear Admiral Gene LaRoque, and other evidence had led him to believe that the "secret agreement" existed.

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He also said: "It is absurd that the foreign minister and other officials are insisting that there was no such agreement without

even investigating, despite the fact that official documents showing the existence of the secret agreement had been made public in the U.S. This is unacceptable to the public. The government has the responsibility to provide an explanation. Since a number of prime ministers and foreign ministers knew about this, the politicians should take the blame."

With regard to whether nuclear arms should be brought into Japan, Kono stated: "The present situation is different from during the Cold War era, so a proper debate on nuclear deterrence should be conducted. Even if we are to rely on the U.S. nuclear umbrella, there is too much ambiguity in matters such as the types of nuclear arms and whether Japan will also be allowed to control the nuclear button. The secret agreement is nothing but an obstacle to this debate."

Kono's pursuit of this issue in the previous Diet session fell through with the dissolution of the Diet. He said that while there is no mechanism for the members of the next committee to take over this issue, "if the Foreign Affairs Committee determines that the government's statement is false and is unacceptable, the deliberation process will stop. It has such power, at least. I hope the next committee chairman will continue to pursue this issue," expressing his hope.

(6) Minshuto to staff envisaged national strategy bureau with local representatives based on idea that came up in Ozawa-Hashimoto meeting

YOMIURI (Page 1) (Full)
August 5, 2009

Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) President Yukio Hatoyama held a press conference yesterday in which he revealed a plan to appoint local representatives as members of the envisaged national strategy bureau and the administrative renovation council if it takes over the reins of government in the upcoming House of Representatives election. The two bodies are planned to be placed directly under the control of the Prime Minister. The objective of this plan is to have the wishes of local governments reflected (in the central government) in reviewing role-sharing between the central and local governments.

The DPJ manifesto (campaign pledges) vows to establish the national strategy bureau to formulate a budgetary framework under the initiative of lawmakers and the administrative renovation council to review the overall administration.

At the press conference, Hatoyama said emphatically: "The administrative renovation council will fundamentally reexamine the modalities of the central and local governments." Hatoyama also explained the plan to appoint local representatives this way: "We will make certain that the administrative renovation council and the national strategy bureau are staffed with one to several local representatives each."

According to a DPJ executive, the idea of appointing local representatives to the national strategy bureau and other bodies came up during the meeting yesterday between DPJ Deputy President Ichiro Ozawa and Osaka Gov. Toru Hashimoto. Hashimoto proposed

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appointing local leaders to key cabinet posts, such as the national strategic bureau, and Ozawa replied, "That's a good idea," according to the DPJ executive.

After his meeting with Hashimoto, Ozawa told the press corps, "We have agreed on a plan to build a new national governing system in collaboration with local representatives." Ozawa also indicated that he now clearly understands Hashimoto's idea of introducing a doshu regional bloc system.

(7) Number of constituencies where DPJ, SDP, PNP will cooperate will increase three-fold, while number where they will compete will decrease to one-third of the number for previous election:
Constituency adjustments with eye on formation of coalition

government now over

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
August 5, 2009

The Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) on July 30 finished the work of selecting candidates for the Lower House election on August 30. It has cut the number of candidates running on its ticket by 20 from the 2005 Lower House election. On the other hand, it has increased cooperation to other opposition parties in the form of increasing endorsements given to candidates fielded by the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the People's New Party (PNP) or not fielding its own candidates where other opposition parties are fielding their own candidates to 27, triple the number from the previous election. The number of constituencies where DPJ candidates will be competing with candidates of other opposition parties has been decreased from 46 in the previous Lower House election to 15. The DPJ has adopted this strategy with an eye on the establishment of a coalition government after the Lower House election.

Small parties alarmed about being pushed into the background

The DPJ has endorsed candidates for 269 single-seat constituencies out of 300. In 24 constituencies, it will recommend candidates fielded by other opposition parties, instead of fielding its own candidates. It will effectively support Makiko Tanaka, a non-affiliated candidate to run in the Niigata No. 5 Constituency, and Tetsuo Kanno, who will run on the SDP ticket in the Miyagi No. 6 Constituency, by not fielding its own candidates there. There are three such constituencies.

Neither the SDP nor the PNP recommended any DPJ candidates in the previous election. However, the SDP will recommend DPJ candidates in 21 constituencies and the PNP will recommend DPJ candidates in 248 constituencies, substantively reducing the number of constituencies where opposition parties' candidates will vie with one another.

The reason opposition parties are strengthening their election cooperation is to win anti-LDP votes, by unifying candidates running from opposition parties. Their common aim is to force the LDP and the New Komeito into the minority. For instance, in the Hyogo No. 6 Constituency, the SDP will not field its own candidate, and the PNP will recommend a DPJ candidate. In the previous election, an LDP candidate won the seat there, as the DPJ and the SDP respectively put up their own candidates. The combined votes won by the DPJ and SDP candidates exceed the number of votes won by the LDP candidate.

In the meantime, candidates of both the DPJ and the SDP will run in

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14 constituencies, including the Aomori No. 1 Constituency and the Saitama 13 Constituency. A DPJ candidate and a PNP candidate will compete only in the Okayama No. 2 Constituency. This is because although the three opposition parties have a common goal of bringing about a power shift, small parties, which are alarmed about the possibility of being pushed into the background between the two major parties, want to secure as many seats as possible.

Among competing constituencies, where both the DPJ and the SDP put up their candidates, the combined votes secured by both parties' candidates in the Kanagawa No. 12 Constituency exceeds votes won by the LDP candidate who was elected. Deputy President Ichiro Ozawa began making adjustments toward unifying candidates there. However, the SDP did not give in. Its senior member said: "This is our incumbent lawmakers' constituency. It is the DPJ that should give in."

Impact of JCP votes holds key

Since the Japanese Communist Party (JCP) has drastically cut back on the number of candidates it will field in single-seat constituencies - from 275 in the previous election to 152, the impact of JCP votes cannot be disregarded. A senior DPJ Election Committee member expressed hopes, "Each constituency has 10,000 to 30,000 JCP votes. We hope 70 percent of those votes come to the DPJ."

A DPJ candidate was defeated by an LDP candidate by about 1,400 votes in the Gunma No. 2 Constituency. Provided that 70 percent of JCP votes go to a DPJ candidate, votes to be secured by a DPJ candidate will top those to be won by an LDP candidate.

The situation is similar in the Hokkaido No. 3 Constituency and the Aichi No. 8 Constituency.

(8) 2009 Lower House election: Hereditary candidates in torment

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Abridged slightly)
August 5, 2009

At an open forum held on the evening of July 28 at the Miura Civic Hall in the No.11 district in Kanagawa Prefecture, Shinjiro Koizumi, a candidate on the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) ticket to run in the upcoming House of Representatives election, refuted other candidates' criticism of the hereditary-seat system of passing down Diet seats to descendants. He asserted: "The hereditary system for politicians is different from that for kabuki actors and rakugo (sit-down comedy) performers. Politicians get hereditary seats after they are elected by voters.

The practice of candidates running for the Diet seats held by their parents prevents capable human resources from entering the political community. Following growing criticism of the hereditary-seat system, the LDP at one point this spring looked into the appropriateness of endorsing candidates running for Diet seats held by their parents, including Shinjiro, the second son of former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi. The LDP decided to place full-scale restrictions on hereditary candidates in the election after the next Lower House election.

The Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) ridicules the Kanagawa No. 11 district as a 100-year-old Koizumi dynasty. Shinjiro's great-grandfather Matajiro Koizumi served as posts and

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telecommunications minister and his grandfather Junya was defense director general. Shinjiro, who would be a fourth-generation lawmaker, is a synonym for hereditary candidates.

The Shinjiro camp has formulated a strategy while calculating the merits and demerits of hereditary candidates.

Shinjiro refrained from giving stumping speeches until late June because Hideaki Takeuchi, secretary general of the LDP Kanagawa chapter, told him that he should first visit supporters who also backed his father.

However, since a candidate backed by Junichiro was defeated in the June 28 Yokosuka mayoral election, Shinjiro became increasingly alarmed and took to the streets to campaign.

When Shinjiro gives a speech, he is always surrounded by a crowd. Media reports on the hereditary issue have contributed to raising Shinjiro's name recognition. On Aug. 2 when his campaign office opened in Yokosuka City, he stressed: "Every day I am severely criticism." He said that he did not expect to receive campaign support from his father and older brother, actor Kotaro Koizumi. He did not ask the New Komeito to recommend him and rejected the LDP's offer to let him also run in the proportional representation race. He appears to be determined to do away with his negative image of being weak and relying on his father's influence.

Shinjiro Koizumi and DPJ candidate Katsuhito Yokokume, who are in their 20's, will compete in the Kanagawa No. 11 district.

Yokokume said at a gathering: "It is impossible for me to compete with a hereditary candidate. But it is my job to correct such politics." Koizumi and Yokokume have nothing in common except being young. Yokokume, a native of Aichi Prefecture, decided to run in the Kanagawa No. 11 district, thinking that LDP-led politics should be reviewed in the birthplace of Koizumi reform.

On the morning of July 29 in Mihama Ward, Chiba City, Shoichi Usui

(candidate on the LDP ticket) spoke to about 30 aged women, who were there to play gateball: "My father, Hideo, retired after serving as a Diet member for 28 years. I will do my best to serve the nation."

Usui decided to mention that he is a hereditary candidate based on his judgment that if he does not refer to his father, he will be regarded as a faithless son. His father Hideo was elected to the Lower House eight times. His grandfather Soichi served in both Diet chambers. He has many elderly supporters, who call themselves members of the Usui party. Therefore, Shoichi Usui is positive about being a hereditary candidate, noting: "The hereditary issue is not totally negative. It has raised my name recognition."

However, Usui has never mentioned being a hereditary candidate in his stumping speeches.

DPJ candidate Kaname Tajima, in a DPJ meeting on July 26 in Chiba City, sought to constrain Usui, saying: "Considering the fact that both Abe and Fukuda gave up their administrations, it is obvious that the hereditary-seat system has its evils. Tajima, however, intends to criticize hereditary candidates only in DPJ meetings, thinking that if he criticizes the hereditary system, he will be seen as carrying out negative campaigning.

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ZUMWALT